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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT
CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT; INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY
ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL
PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fiftieth year

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Letter dated 8 June 1995 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Delhi Declaration issued at the eighth meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), held at New Delhi from 2 to 4 May 1995 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex is circulated as an official document of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, under items 70, 80, 86, 97 (a) and (i), 107, 109, 110, 112, 114 and 149 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Prakash SHAH

ANNEX

Delhi Declaration, issued at the eighth meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, held at New Delhi from 2 to 4 May 1995

Introduction

1. The Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia, the King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, His Excellency Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, the President of the Republic of Maldives, His Excellency Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, the Prime Minister of Nepal, the Rt. Hon. Manmohan Adhikari, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, His Excellency Mr. Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari and the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Her Excellency Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, met at the Eight Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) at New Delhi, India, on 2-4 May 1995.

SAARC decade

2. The Heads of State or Government expressed their satisfaction on the achievements of the first decade of SAARC and resolved to celebrate its completion of the first decade both in the individual member States and collectively. They endorsed the proposal of the Council of Ministers to convene a commemorative session of the Council on the theme: "SAARC - Vision of the second decade" to identify the areas on which SAARC should focus in its second decade.

Regional cooperation

3. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their resolve to intensify regional cooperation in order to accelerate the process of promoting the welfare and improving the quality of life of the peoples of South Asia. They reiterated their commitment to the principles and objectives enshrined in the SAARC charter, particularly, to the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, national independence, non-use of force and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. They recalled their conviction that in an increasingly interdependent world, regional cooperation was a dynamic instrument for promoting economic prosperity, mutual understanding and good neighbourly relations to achieve the objectives of peace and stability in South Asia. In that context, a climate of peace and stability would contribute to the economic growth.

Eradication of poverty in South Asia

4. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their commitment to the eradication of poverty in South Asia, preferably by the year 2002 A.D. through an agenda of action.

5. The leaders endorsed the recommendations of the Finance/Planning Ministers' Meeting held at Dhaka in July 1994, which recommended that a mechanism should be set up that would act as a forum for the exchange of information on poverty eradication programmes, in the context of the policies and strategies adopted, particularly exchange of information on technologies that were relevant to efforts at poverty eradication. They agreed that the process could be strengthened by sharing and exchanging relevant studies carried out by independent research institutions and experts. The mechanism would be in the form of a three-tier institutional structure as recommended in the report and would meet once a year. They noted that such a mechanism had been set up enabling the procedures of exchange of information to commence and welcomed the offer of India to host the first round of the three-tier mechanism.

6. The Heads of State or Government directed that the next meeting of Finance/ Planning Ministers consider the efficacy of such mechanism towards eradicating poverty in the region and report on the progress achieved to the ninth SAARC summit, through the Council of Ministers.

7. In that context, they decided to declare 1995 as the "SAARC Year of Poverty Eradication".

8. Acknowledging that the abiding human qualities of dignity, creativity and productive potential were eroded by chronic poverty, the Heads of State or Government reiterated their commitment to empowering the poor for enhanced growth consistent with human development and equity.

9. Recognizing that poverty was a complex multi-dimensional problem with origins in both national and international domains, country-specific programmes to tackle poverty and international efforts supporting national efforts and the parallel process of creating a supportive international environment conducive to economic growth and social development of developing countries, were crucial for a solution to the problem. The World Summit for Social Development recognized the need for focusing the attention of the international community on and supporting the special needs of countries and regions in which there were substantial concentrations of people living in poverty, in particular those in South Asia and which faced serious difficulties in achieving social and economic development. The Heads of State or Government reiterated their commitment to eradicate poverty and noted with appreciation the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development

10. The Heads of State or Government committed themselves to addressing the fundamental causes of poverty and to provide for the basic needs of all. They reaffirmed their commitment to work for guaranteeing the realization of the rights of all, in particular those of the poor, to food, work, shelter, health, education, resources and information.

11. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their commitment to provide expanded opportunities to the poor to enhance their overall capacities and improving living conditions and to adequate economic and social protection during unemployment, disability and old age. While recognizing the need to improve, expand and deregulate markets to promote sustained economic growth, they felt it was essential to mitigate any negative features created by the

market forces and make all efforts to make the market friendly to the poor. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed the necessity to ensure that financial systems and other public policies are geared towards poverty eradication and warned against increase in socially divisive disparities.

12. The Heads of State or Government agreed that the Governments of SAARC countries would have to play a lead role in promoting the support structures needed for poverty eradication, including people's institutions and non-governmental organizations in the context of organizing the people and fostering decentralization and local self-governance and encouraging organization of the poor, in the context of their social and economic interests.

SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA)

13. The Heads of State or Government noted with satisfaction that subsequent to the signing of the Framework Agreement on the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) during their seventh summit at Dhaka in April 1993, the first round of trade negotiations to exchange trade concessions among member States have been completed. They directed that all necessary steps should be taken to facilitate ratification by all member States and operationalize SAPTA by the end of 1995 as mandated.

14. The leaders reiterated their firm belief that the operationalization of SAPTA would herald the beginning of a new and significant process of regional cooperation and would lend strength to SAARC as an institution for promoting the welfare of the peoples of South Asia.

15. In view of the fast-changing international economic environment, creation of major trading and economic groupings, establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) subsequent to the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and unilateral economic liberalization measures being adopted by member countries, the Heads of State or Government emphasized the urgency of broadening and deepening cooperation within a specific and rapid time-frame in the core areas of trade and economic relations in the region. Those developments called for added urgency to achieve more progress towards operationalization of SAPTA and intensification of cooperation to expand regional trade. To that end, they decided that the "components" and "additional measures" identified in articles 4 and 6 respectively of the SAPTA Agreement should be implemented.

Integrated Programme of Action

16. The Heads of State or Government noted the progress made through the Integrated Programme of Action covering a number of crucial areas and activities.

Regional centres

17. The leaders welcomed the establishment of the SAARC Documentation Centre (SDC) at New Delhi in May 1994 and the SAARC Meteorological Research Centre (SMRC) at Dhaka in January 1995.

Women in development

18. Noting that increased political and social consciousness in the region had highlighted the issues of elimination of gender-disparity and empowerment of women, which were essential for their socio-economic development, the Heads of State or Government underlined the urgency of addressing those issues through further affirmative action.

19. The leaders endorsed the "Kathmandu resolution on women and family health", adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Women and Family Health at Kathmandu in November 1993, and expressed satisfaction that appropriate programmes were being undertaken to implement the resolution at the national level by the member States.

20. The leaders noted the progress in the implementation of the plan of action to mark 1991-2000 as the SAARC Decade of the Girl-Child, and requested the Council of Ministers to conduct a comprehensive mid-decade review for presentation to the ninth SAARC summit.

21. Recognizing the serious threat faced by certain groups of girl children in especially difficult circumstances including those orphaned, disabled and exploited, the leaders decided that an urgent appraisal of the situation of those children be undertaken by the Council of Minister and specific recommendations be presented to the ninth SAARC summit.

22. Considering that the exploitation of the girl child was a direct reflection of the status of women in society, the leaders reaffirmed their resolve to take necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girl children.

Children

23. The Heads of State or Government expressed satisfaction that the annual reviews of the situation of children in SAARC countries for the years 1993 and 1994 had been completed, which indicated a reduction in infant mortality and significant progress in the immunization programme for children in the region.

24. Recalling the mid-decade goals of the World Summit for Children, the Heads of State or Government resolved to intensify their efforts both at the national and regional levels for attainment of those goals.

25. The leaders welcomed that all member States had become party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They felt that the recently held Cairo International Conference on Population and Development in September 1994 and the Copenhagen World Summit on Social Development in March 1995 had imparted fresh impetus to the ongoing efforts for the survival, protection and development of children in South Asia.

Youth

26. The Heads of State or Government endorsed the Malé resolution on youth adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Youth in South Asia held in the

Maldives in May 1994 and noted that the Conference had, inter alia, served to focus attention on the status of the youth and the challenges faced by them. The leaders noted with satisfaction that the agenda for action incorporated in the resolution was being implemented by member States with a view to integrating the youth into the process of national development. They noted with satisfaction that the SAARC youth resolution had been adopted and the SAARC youth awards scheme had been established.

27. The leaders expressed satisfaction on the implementation of the plan of action to mark 1994 as the SAARC Year of the Youth in member States and resolved to continue the momentum generated in member States.

Persons with disability

28. The Heads of State or Government noted with satisfaction that the Ministerial Conference on Disabled Persons was held at Islamabad in December 1993. They endorsed the Islamabad resolution on disabled persons and the recommendations of the Conference and noted that the Conference had further increased awareness among the peoples of South Asia regarding the needs and problems of the disabled persons. They welcomed the activities and programmes launched by the member States in pursuance of the resolution for the protection and promotion of persons with disability.

Shelter

29. The Heads of State or Government, recognizing that housing was a basic right for all people and that, in addition to governmental efforts, private initiatives of the people and non-governmental agencies should be supported, reaffirmed their commitment to work towards the global objective of "Shelter for All by the Year 2000".

Literacy

30. The Heads of State or Government noted that illiteracy was one of the major causes of poverty, backwardness and social injustices and called upon the member States to initiate more concrete programmes aimed at eradicating illiteracy in the region, preferably by the year 2000 A.D. They decided to observe 1996 as the "SAARC Year of Literacy".

Environment

31. Reaffirming the need for a concerted action for the protection and preservation of the environment, the Heads of State or Government expressed their satisfaction over the formulation of a common position by member States prior to the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and the presentation of the collective position at the Yokohama Conference. They recognized that international cooperation was vital for building up national capabilities, transfer of appropriate technology and promotion of multilateral projects and research efforts in natural disaster reduction.

32. The Heads of State or Government expressed their deep concern at the unabated degradation of the environment and recurrence of devastating natural

disasters. They also underscored the risks and dangers involved in overlooking the challenge posed by those problems. They expressed their commitment to implementing at all levels - national, bilateral, regional and global - programmes for the protection and preservation of the environment and prevention of its degradation. The Heads of State or Government stressed the importance of continuing the ongoing SAARC activities in the field of environment.

33. The Heads of State or Government noted that although some work had been carried out in the area of disseminating information on the problems of environmental degradation and their impact on the region, progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the SAARC regional study on the causes and consequences of natural disasters and the protection and preservation of the environment and the regional study on greenhouse effect and its impact on the region, which were completed in 1992, had been slow. They stressed the importance of effective and speedy implementation of the recommendations of the two studies and requested member States to take all necessary steps without further delay in vital areas such as sharing and developing scientific capabilities to protect and manage the environment. They further directed the Technical Committee on Environment to monitor the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the two studies, and submit a report to the ninth summit through the Council of Ministers.

34. The Heads of State or Government recalled the decisions expressed in the Dhaka Declaration of April 1993 on the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development of June 1992 and reiterated the urgent need to ensure the flow of new and additional resources that were adequate and predictable to implement successfully the programmes of Agenda 21. They also recalled the United Nations minimum target for developed countries of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as official development assistance, a target which was yet to be approximated by most developed countries. The Heads of State or Government also noted that international actions in the area of environmental protection should be based on partnership and collective endeavours and should reflect the principle enunciated in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, of common but differentiated responsibilities. Integral to such actions was the promotion of economic growth in developing countries that was both sustained and sustainable and direct action in eradicating poverty.

35. The Heads of State or Government also noted that the Commission on Sustainable Development set up to monitor the implementation of the Rio agreements had met thrice since their earlier meeting and expressed the hope that the Commission would be able to facilitate the necessary flow of resources and technology.

36. The Heads of State or Government also noted that the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change had both come into force and the first meetings of the conferences of parties to each Convention had been held. Welcoming those developments, they urged that developing countries should be assisted in meeting their commitments under the Conventions. The establishment of the restructured Global Environment Facility was a beginning in that direction. However, the Heads of State or

Government urged that funds of a much larger order would be necessary if the needs of the Conventions were to be met.

Terrorism

37. The Heads of State or Government expressed serious concern on the spread of terrorism in and outside the region and reiterated their unequivocal condemnation of all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal. They deplored all such acts for their ruinous impact on life, property, socio-economic development and political stability, as well as on regional and international peace and cooperation.

38. The Heads of State or Government once again emphasized that highest priority should be accorded to the enactment of enabling legislation at the national level to give effect to the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. They urged member States that had not yet done so to enact expeditiously enabling legislation at the national level to implement the Convention and reiterated the need for a constant dialogue and interaction among the concerned agencies of member States, including submission of periodic recommendations to the Council of Ministers.

39. They underlined that cooperation among SAARC member States was vital if the scourge of terrorism was to be eliminated from the region.

Drug trafficking

40. The Heads of State or Government recognized that drug abuse and drug trafficking with its linkages with organized crime, illicit arms trade and terrorism continued to pose a serious threat to the security and stability in the region.

41. While noting the efforts made by Member States as well as the regional cooperation under way to combat that pernicious trade, the leaders stressed the urgency of further strengthening the process of cooperation.

42. The leaders welcomed the ratification of the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances by all member States and entry into force of the Convention in September 1993. They urged all member States to take necessary follow-up action for effective implementation of the Convention.

Science and technology

43. The Heads of State or Government reiterated that cooperation in the area of science and technology should be accorded high priority. Noting that some progress had been made towards establishment of networking arrangements, inter alia, in the fields of biotechnology, genetic engineering, energy modelling techniques and low-cost housing and building technologies, the leaders called for further acceleration of that process.

People-to-people contact

44. Reiterating their earlier resolve to promote further people-to-people contact through increased involvement of the peoples of South Asia in the process of regional cooperation, the Heads of State or Government noted with satisfaction that such interaction had been taking place through various fora both within and outside the SAARC framework and had contributed to the promotion of mutual understanding in the region.

45. The leaders noted that the Association for Persons of the Legal Communities of SAARC Countries (SAARCLAW) had been accorded recognition by SAARC. The leaders hoped that SAARCLAW would play an effective role in fostering closer cooperation among the legal communities in the region.

46. The leaders noted with satisfaction that the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) had been functioning satisfactorily. They expressed hope that SCCI and its constituent units in the member States would do their utmost to promote trade and economic cooperation in the SAARC region. The leaders commended SCCI for disseminating information on the scope, content and potentials of the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) among the business community in the region.

47. The Heads of State or Government expressed satisfaction that the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme was being implemented smoothly and had enhanced the scope of people-to-people contacts.

South Asian Development Fund (SADF)

48. The Heads of State or Government endorsed the establishment of a three-window South Asian Development Fund (SADF) with the merger of SAARC Fund for Regional Projects and the SAARC Regional Fund and a third window for social development and infrastructure development.

Projection of collective positions

49. The Heads of State or Government recalled their decision taken at the seventh SAARC summit regarding development of collective positions in international forums on such issues as would enhance the international profile of South Asia and would enable the member States to articulate their position on them more effectively. They noted that the Council of Ministers had formulated a procedure for the projection of SAARC collective positions at such international forums.

50. They noted with satisfaction that pursuant to the decision at the seventh SAARC summit, collective positions had been formulated by member States and presented at the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and the World Summit for Social Development. The leaders also noted with satisfaction that a SAARC collective position would also be presented at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing in September 1995.

Security of small States

51. The Heads of State or Government, reaffirming their commitment to universally accepted principles and norms relating to the sovereign rights and territorial integrity of all States, recognized that small States, because of their particular problems, required special measures of support for safeguarding their independence and territorial integrity. They reiterated that real protection of small and weaker States should be firmly rooted in the rule of law. This, they stressed, should be ensured by all countries either severally or collectively through the pursuit of appropriate actions.

International political developments

52. The Heads of State or Government noted that the end of the cold war had resulted in fundamental changes in the political landscape. It was therefore important that a new idiom be found to address new concerns. The disappearance of the confrontation between the two Power blocs presented an opportunity towards building a genuine consensus for a new international order.

53. The Heads of State or Government had wide-ranging discussions on the current global political trends and future prospects, particularly those issues that concerned South Asia. In that context, they reiterated their deep commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen the United Nations as the central instrument for peace, security, disarmament, development and cooperation among the nations of the world. While pledging their support to all constructive initiatives aimed at strengthening the United Nations, the leaders emphasized that such initiatives must be undertaken with the sole objective of rendering the United Nations and all its organs more democratic, efficient and effective and not to limit the focus of its attention to a narrow and isolated range of objectives.

54. Appreciating the role of some SAARC member States in United Nations peace-keeping operations in various parts of the world, the Heads of State or Government felt that such participation had contributed towards maintenance of peace and security in the world.

55. The Heads of State or Government reiterated their firm commitment to the principles and objectives of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and underlined the continued validity and relevance of these principles and objectives in the contemporary world. They recalled the stabilizing role played by the Movement in global affairs since its inception. They expressed their deep conviction that the Movement's innate strength equipped it to continue to play a most constructive role in laying the foundations of a new world order based on the rule of law, non-discrimination, equity and cooperation.

56. The Heads of State or Government noted that while the international community had successfully created the norm against chemical and biological weapons, it had, unfortunately, been unable to do the same with regard to nuclear weapons. The leaders were convinced that more needed to be done and at a far greater pace. Reiterating that the utmost priority was to be given to nuclear disarmament, given the danger posed by nuclear weapons, they urged the

Conference on Disarmament to negotiate an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances and to undertake negotiations for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework.

57. The Heads of State or Government expressed their strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. They agreed to take all necessary steps to achieve that objective.

International economic and social issues

58. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and reaffirmed their commitment to implement fully and as scheduled the Final Act of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations. They also welcomed the coming into existence of the WTO and expressed the hope that it would help to expand international trade, particularly that of the developing countries. They reaffirmed the immediate need to elaborate policies to enable developing countries to take advantage of expanded international trading opportunities, in the context of the full implementation of the Round. They called upon all countries to refrain from any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and enlightened regionalism and globalism that created obstacles to trade relations among States and thereby impeded the full realization of social and economic development.

59. Recognizing that the promotion of mutually reinforcing broad-based sustained economic growth on a global scale, as well as a non-discriminatory and multilateral rule-based international trading system, provided a basis for social development, the Heads of State or Government called for the establishment of an open, equitable, cooperative and mutually beneficial international economic environment. They also called for a reduction of trade barriers and promotion of expanded access to global markets.

60. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their commitment to safeguard the basic interests of workers. They called upon countries to refrain from erecting trade barriers in the guise of promotion and protection of workers' rights. They deplored the tendency to impose any conditionalities on international trade, whetner as a "social clause" or as the "environmental clause", while reiterating their commitment to ensuring workers' rights as well as protection of the environment.

Special measures for the least developed and land-locked countries

61. The Heads of State or Government noted with deep concern that economic growth in the least developed countries and land-locked countries was not satisfactory and emphasized the need to take special measures for accelerating the process of development. They reiterated the need to fulfil the internationally agreed aid targets for the developing countries and the least developed countries. They emphasized on the need for exceptional finance to facilitate implementation of economic reform programmes in SAARC countries.

Dates and venue of the ninth meeting of the SAARC Heads of State or Government

62. The Heads of State or Government gratefully accepted the offer of the Government of Maldives to host the ninth SAARC summit. The dates would be finalized in consultation with member States.

63. The Heads of State or Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka expressed their deep appreciation for the exemplary manner in which the Prime Minister of India had discharged his responsibilities as Chairman of the meeting. They expressed their profound gratitude for the warm and gracious hospitality extended to them by the Government and the people of the Republic of India and for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.